

From: Kenneth Wall <kwall-libbrd@mywfpl.com>

Sent: Monday, 22 June 2026 13:33:05

To: Wesley J Moreno <WJMORENO@myescambia.com>

Cc: Christal L. Bell-Rivera <cbrivera@mywfpl.com>; Joyce Hopson <jhopson-libbrd@mywfpl.com>; Rachel Hendrix <rhendrix-libbrd@mywfpl.com>; Alison A. Rogers <aarogers@myescambia.com>; Legal <Legal@myescambia.com>; Adam Cobb <ACobb@cityofpensacola.com>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] County Administrator Overreach Re: Library Board of Governance

⚠ THIS EMAIL IS FROM AN EXTERNAL EMAIL ACCOUNT ⚠

Dear Mr. Moreno,

I am writing regarding the cancellation of the West Florida Public Libraries Board of Governance's regularly scheduled monthly meeting.

Shortly after 11:00 a.m. today, I was contacted by the Library Director's Aide and informed that the meeting had been cancelled. When I asked for the reason, she indicated she did not know but agreed to have Director Christal Bell-Rivera contact me. Approximately thirty minutes later, Director Bell-Rivera advised me that you had directed that Board of Governance meetings be cancelled for the summer until a decision is made regarding appointments to the current Board vacancies.

I respectfully request clarification regarding the legal or governing authority under which this action was taken.

After reviewing the governing documents establishing and regulating the Board of Governance, I have been unable to identify any provision authorizing the County Administrator to unilaterally cancel meetings of the Board or suspend its operations.

Specifically:

- Resolution No. R2013-17 establishes the Board of Governance as the governing body responsible for oversight of the West Florida Public Library System, including recommending a Library Director, conducting the Director's annual evaluation, and making recommendations regarding the annual budget.
- The 2013 Interlocal Agreement similarly establishes the Board of Governance to establish policy for the Library System and make recommendations regarding the annual budget. The Agreement further provides that the Library Director is an employee of Escambia County who serves under the supervision of the County Administrator while carrying out policy established by the Board. I find no provision granting the County Administrator authority to suspend or cancel meetings of the Board itself.
- The Board's 2024 Bylaws provide that the Board **shall meet monthly**, establish its annual meeting schedule, and that **special meetings may be called by the Chair or upon the written request of three members**. The Bylaws further provide that the Library Director, after consultation with the Chair, prepares the agenda and serves as staff liaison to the Board.

Likewise, I have been unable to locate any provision in the Resolution, the Interlocal Agreement, or the Bylaws granting the County Administrator any authority to appoint members to the Board of Governance.

Rather, those governing documents provide that appointments are made by:

- the Escambia County Board of County Commissioners (three members),
- the Pensacola City Council (one member), and
- the Mayor of Pensacola (one member).

Accordingly, I respectfully request that you identify the specific statutory, contractual, or governing authority upon which you relied in directing cancellation of the Board's meetings and in determining that meetings should not occur pending appointments.

I am also concerned by the manner in which this cancellation occurred. Providing notice only hours before a scheduled public meeting is discourteous to Board members who arranged their schedules to fulfill their governance responsibilities, to library staff who prepared for the meeting, and to members of the public who intended to attend. More importantly, cancelling regularly scheduled public meetings deprives residents of an opportunity to address their governing board and diminishes the transparency contemplated by both the Sunshine Law and the governing framework established for the Library System. The Board exists to conduct the public's business in public, and regular meetings are central to that responsibility.

Finally, pursuant to Article V, Section 3 of the Board's Bylaws, this email should also serve as my request that a special meeting of the Board of Governance be convened.

I respectfully request that Director Bell-Rivera, in her capacity as staff liaison to the Board under Article VIII of the Bylaws, coordinate with Board members to determine a mutually available date, provide the required public notice, and schedule the meeting to occur **no later than July 1**, so the Board may continue conducting its business in accordance with its governing documents.

I appreciate your prompt response and look forward to understanding the legal basis for these actions.

Respectfully,

Dr. K. Blaine Wall

Chair

West Florida Public Library Board of Governance

kwall-libbrd@mywfpl.com